THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA) : Sir, may I just point out that the statement has already been made in the Lok Sabha on this issue.

If you would like to ask for the clarifications, may be they can be asked tomorrow, but I think that in keeping with the convention that in both the Houses the Statement should be made on the same day, I request that the Minister be permitted to make the Statement. If you would like to ask the clarifications tomorrow, then we can have the clarifications tomorrow. I think the House should have the Statement on the same day.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) : Clarifications tomorrow, but the Minister will read the statement now.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : But there is also a statement which is due. The Minister is reading on behalf of his colleague, the Civil Aviation Minister. In view of what has happened today, I think, another Statement is due from the Civil Aviation Minister. So, why one statement tomorrow ?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) : Let this matter be finished within two minutes.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Crash of Indian Airlines Plane at Aurangabad in Maharashtra

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT) : Sir, with a very heavy heart I share a very sad information with the House that today at 1305 hours, IC-49, which is Delhi-Jaipur-Udaipur-Aurangabad-Bombay bound flight, took off from Aurangabad and immediately after take-off —one preliminary report has come—one of its engines is reported to have caught fire and it crash-landed. It crashed at Aurangabad near the airfield carrying 112 passengers on board. (*Interruptions*) I am just sharing the information about the crash, not the hijack. The Statement on hijack I will make afterwards. I thought I should keep the House informed with whatever information we have received about the accident. The preliminary report, which has been received in the Civil Aviation Ministry is that six crew members and twelve passengers were immediately seen coming out of the accident site. And when the rescue operation started 40 dead bodies were recovered. This was round about 5 o'clock. The Civil Aviation Minister with the Secretary, Civil Aviation and Tourism, has rushed to Aurangabad and he will come back and will give further details to the House. I have also to say that if we get any immediate information, we will keep informing both the Houses—Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha—about the casualties.

In addition, on behalf of my colleague, Mr. Ghulam Nabi Azad, the Minister of Civil Aviation and Tourism, I make a statement on the incident of 24th April, 1993, about the hijack of IC-427.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Hijacking of Indian Airlines Flight IC-427 Delhi—Srinagar on 24th April, 1993

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT) : Hon'ble members are aware of the hijack of Indian Airlines flight IC-427 on 24th April, 1993.

The flight took off from Delhi at 1357 hrs. for Srinagar. At 1443 hrs. a message was received by Air Traffic Control, Delhi, that the plane had been hijacked and was heading for Kabul. A passenger on board, who identified himself as Syed Salauddin, claimed that he was carrying pistols and a hand grenade and demanded that the flight be taken to Kabul. Air Traffic Control of Lahore refused to permit the aircraft to enter Pakistan airspace. The aircraft ultimately landed at 1520 hrs. at Amritsar where the hijacker kept the entire crew and passengers hostage and demanded refuelling so that the aircraft may proceed to Kabul. 141 persons were on board;